

8th Guards Trench Mortar Company (8th GTMCo.)

edited by
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See sketches 54 and 55.

The birthday of the 8th GTMCo. is November 3, 1916. On this day it was marched from Unterlüß to the Trench Mortar [Park] Cologne. It was in Unterlüß at the 5th MWEB under the company commander, Lt. d. R. Schwengers,

heavy train the composed
: of . noR. Schütze),
"light " "953 ("1) " III. " (Lt. d. R. Forster),

The Besp. Dept. led Off.St. Riewers. (Appointed Feldw.Lt. on April 22, 1917.)

The head strength was 5 off., 246 subs. and teams.

The training in Unterlüß had lasted from September 22 to November 3, 1916.

In Cologne the Company received equipment and wagons and departed on the evening of November 6 and through the whole of Germany via Brest-Litovsk to Pinsk, where it arrived on November 9 in the evening (see Map 54). Forward of Pinsk ran the great German front line that was reached at the end of the 1915 campaign and always firmly held at that point. The Company was assigned to the Guards Cav.Div. (Army Detachment Gronau) and was assigned by it to the commander of the artillery. However, this relationship was changed three weeks later.

The first work, from November 16 onward, consisted of installing a heavy and a medium mortar at the bridgehead of Vysokoye on the Pina (7 km northeast of Pinsk). In this place and in Stongpoint 1 of the 2a Line was the quarters for the ordered work force. Mortars (2 light) were also installed in nearby Potschepowo; likewise a medium and a light at the 22nd Res.Jäger.Batl. (5th Cav.Div.) in Stitichev, 5 km south of Pinsk. Here the first shots were fired (12 medium, 33 light mortars).

On December 17 hit a reinforcement platoon of 1 officer, 48 men, 1 heavy, 2 m., 6 l. mortars, bringing the company to 21 barrels. This corresponded to the general reinforcement that had been made by the War Ministry as a result of the performance of the MW off Verdun and, in particular, the light ones on the Somme.

At the end of December, the mortars in Stitichev were able to successfully take part in the battles for the Russian bases at Mona Lisa and Marushka bridgehead. Four weeks later the middle mortar there got a crack in the barrel due to the cold and had to replace the barrel and barrel jacket.

The first award with the EK II fell on December 21 to Lt. Serr and Ufff. High Count. By the end of March 1917, 17 more awards followed. There were also several promotions. VF Michael was promoted to sergeant (2/22/17). In January the company received 13 train teams. They had their first casualty on February 11, 17 from shrapnel. (List of wounded p. 156 ff.)

On February 16, 17, a medium platoon was put together for use by the 1st Infantry Division under the leadership of Lts. d. L. Krech. (1/27/17 transferred to.) The train returned on 4/10/17.

In winter the hard ground made the work very difficult, in spring it was the drainage work that required a great deal of energy. The combat activity was i. A. low.

From 2nd to 7th 4. were in the company of each regiment of the division 2 Off., 5 Ufff. for training on l. MW commanded. Since the 5th KD got its own MWK, the mortars (1 m., 1 l.) installed in it were returned to the company.

On May 1st another use began for them through temporary allocation (— August 17th, 17) to the 81st RD in the same AA. The bridgehead position was taken over by a platoon of MWKomp. the 5th KD All l. Throwers had to be handed over to position troops.

After about a two-hour train journey on the Pinsk — Brest-Litovsk route to Ivanovo station and continuing on the narrow-gauge railway to the north-east, the comp. The new task should be in the installation of m. and heavy. There are mortars — divided into two mortar groups (north and south) — on the Oginski Canal in the north section.

Exploration and installation soon began. From May 16th, 2 heavy and 7 m. mortar ready to fire. Since on the orders of Gen. v. Gronau, the mortar stands had to be expanded as bases at the same time, so there was a lot of work. The enemy species also occasionally occupied the positions with light fire. On June 6th the Pion fell. Schmitz on mortar guard. The Olschany cemetery received his mortal remains.

At the beginning of June 17 the company had to swap the "Grunewald camp" for the "Hasenheide" and "Oberschipperheim" camps. At the beginning of July, the 81st RD had to be made available for other uses for a few weeks: 2 Off. (Lt. Forster, Off.St. Hein), 9 Ufff., 65 men and 2 heavy. MW and device. On August 11, the company was able to take part in a fire raid on the enemy forest and locks. This wore the heavy Throw in strong enemy Art.Fire in the lb line, causing Pion. Denz was killed by shrapnel.

Mid-August brought a big change. 4 officers (Lt. Schwengers, Zander, Serr, VF Greiff), 135 men, 8 m mortars, 14 vehicles, 45 horses were intended to participate in an operation of great importance to the 8th Army. The rest of the comp. — the heavy platoon — under Lt. Forster had to remain in the section until further notice. It can therefore be established that from now on the company had been torn apart into two widely separated parts for several weeks.

The trip went on August 18 with the small train to Ivanovo station and from there by train via Brest-Litovsk — Bialystok — Insterburg — Mitau — Neugut to Skarbe, from where the march to the Eser-West forest camp (see sketch). GPK 301; ibid the overall situation for the Düna crossing near Riga) was started. The MWOff. Oberost zb V., to which all deployed MW formations (see also 7th G.T.M.Co.) were subordinate, ordered the comp. to the MW camp "Kuhler Grund" in the bivouac. It was reached at noon on 23 August.

The company was given the designation "MWK Oberost". The "Heavy Train 94" joined it. The accommodation in the bivouac south of Ūrkül first had to be made into makeshift living quarters and stables.

The operation took place in section II, subsection D. The comp .was used in 4 groups.

1st group 2 with mortar	VF Greiff,
2nd "	3 " " Lt. Zander,
3rd "	3" " Lt. Zerr,
4."	4 bad. " Lt. Brüdner (Comp. 94).

ForThrowers had to be positioned 45 times, for every meter 70 shots. This was made easier by the fact that the forest reached close to our own position. The mortars were installed in the selected ranges, which were surveyed by the measuring team; the telephone lines were stretched. On August 31 —^{a.m.}, the company moved into position and eagerly awaited the dawn of September 1.

2:00^{a.m.} The mortars and command^{4°} began 8 artillery fire, 6° mine fire. Everything worked. The effect was very good. 8° the fire was stopped as the infantry had already started crossing. The MW were removed and brought back, the positions cleaned up. bte Komp. did not take part in the further offensive, which led across the Dina. Her new destiny pointed her upriver to the Jakobstadt area. After two bivouac nights at Scarbe station, loading took place on September 13 at Merzendorf station and transport via Neugut to Daudsewas station, where the night was spent in a forest camp. The company spent the days from September 14th to 24th in the forest camp Gottlob, 10 km west of Jakobstadt. In the meantime, 4 groups and 2 meter mortars under the Lts. Zander, Serr, VF Greiff and Mäcklenburg set up a "Hindenburg company", which, however, stood our good star. The ammunition transport, with the persistent rain and the bottomless paths, took a lot out of the strength of man and horse. An average of 40 shots were available for each mortar. On September 21 —^{a.m.}, the company moved into position. Dense fog prevented any observation when zeroing in. Three mortars were paralyzed by enemy action and two by damage. Shortly after 7° am. came the order of the section to cease fire. However, since the weather was just clearing up and occupied enemy machine gun positions could be observed, the Komp. Führer opened at 7.45 am. fired up again independently and has now had good success. But after another ¾ hours the ammunition was lacking. One dead and 5 wounded formed the painful loss of that day.

On September 20, the heavy platoon (Lt. Förster) that had stayed behind on the Oginsky Canal at 81st RD arrived in the Daudsewas forest camp, but without an MW.

The days from 1st to 3rd 10. spent the company in Mitau in citizens' quarters. She received new mortars and was allowed to exchange 40 horses with motor pool columns of the 8th Army. She went towards a varied, uplifting act of war: the campaign in Italy.

In the 11th Battle of the Isonzo in August and September 1917, the Italians again failed to achieve their major goal, the breakthrough to Trieste. But the OHL of the Austrians, the "AOK", rightly organized a 12th Isonzo battle, with which the Italians intended to continue their efforts. The Austro-Hungarian The army was weakened and, given the terrain, could not expect the next major battle where it was standing, but for the same reasons it could not move the front back either. Fortunately at least the common front in Russia was relieved by the great counter-attack from Zloczow and troops could be freed for Italy. However, the Austrian army command did not consider itself capable of advancing the Italian front on its own, and so it approached Hindenburg — against the reluctance of Emperor Karl — with the suggestion that a joint German-Austrian to go on the offensive. The German Chief of General Staff finally agreed out of necessity, although the Battle of Ypres was still threatening. Emperor Karl personally took over the supreme command; under him Frhr. Conrad von Hötzendorf, on the Isonzo the "High Command of the Southwest Front", Archduke Eugen of Austria. This was the 10th Austrian Army under Field Marshal Frhrn. v. Krobatin, the German 14th Army under Gen. Otto v. Below and the army group v. Boroëvic (1st and 2nd Isonzo Army) subordinated (see sketch 55).

The German 14th Army was subordinate to the "Group Krauss" (K. and KIAK), which also included the K. and K. 22nd Rifle Division, an excellent mountain division, and these were "allocated" as German troops: The 8th G.T.M.Co. and the 302nd bayer. MWK to each 4 heavy. and 8 m. mortars. The first task of the 22nd Rifle Division was to break through at Flitsch.

After a journey of 4½ days from the bosom of Riga through Russia-Austria via the Semmering to Laibach, the company found itself under a southern sky. After much back and forth, she arrived in Tarvisio by train via Klagenfurt — Villach on October 13th in the evening. From there we walked to Raibl and on the 14th to the Pustina camp near Flitscher Klause.

The company was the Austrian Captain Schiller, MWOff. of the 22nd Rifle Division, and was placed in its section on the Rombonhang with 4 schw. and 6 m. mortars used. On October 16, construction of the position and target reconnaissance began. The target was the enemy "lattice house position" on the Rombonhang. The company was divided into 5 groups:

1st group	Lt. Serr	2 m. Thrower	
2.	"	Lt. Forster	2 heavy Thrower
3.	"	VF Hein	2 "
4.	"	Lt. Zander	2 m. Thrower
5.	"	VF Mädlenburg	2 " "

In very difficult work, straining all forces, the mortars were sometimes transported up to a height of 600 m (Group Serr) in the worst of weather. Austrian troops were busy transporting ammunition. When setting up the mortars, the lack of mortar plans made itself felt in an unpleasant way. Used during October 21 to instruct the mortar leaders in the position and to explain the target and on October 22 another 4 light) (since November 29, 1917 in this rank), the comp^{Zimper} into position. An hour later, the artillery's gas firing began, at 6:30 a.m. their effective firing, and half an hour later the automatic firing of the MW began. On the heights there was heavy snowfall, storm and cold, in the valley rain and fog. Observation was very difficult. 8.55 a.m. the 1st mortars shifted their fire to the 3rd and 4th trenches within 10 minutes. Unfortunately, the brave attacking infantry, Salzburg and Tyroleans from Inf.Reg. 59 and Jäger Regt. 4, not to achieve success. Snow and impassability made movements extremely difficult. But after the successful breakthrough in the valley, the Rifle Division deployed forces over the heights against the backs of the Rombon defenders. By evening the division's breakthrough through the Flitscher position was complete.

Despite strong enemy counteraction, the company had only 2 wounded. After the work was done, the mortars were removed immediately and the Pustina camp was reached again.

But now the harsh fate of the Duna did not repeat itself. This time participation in the campaign was not yet over. This time we were allowed to descend into the promised land that lay before us. Initially only part of the company. On the orders of the 22nd Austrian Rifle Division, their

German officer, Captain Pagenstecher, formed the "Schwengers Flying Battery", which was to follow the division mentioned. It was made from both MW compn. compiled. From our company:

4 Off. (Schwengers as leader, Zander and Serr as platoon leader, Riewer as leader of the example department), 66 subtitles. and crews (including 24 drivers), 4. m. MW, 8 Mun.wagen, 2 food, 2 feed wagons, 1 field kitchen, all vehicles four-in-hand, 42 horses. The 4 heavy Werfer and the other vehicles were taken to Wittelbreth north of Flitsch in the Koritnica Valley, a side valley of the Isonzo.

Let's follow the "Flying Battery" first. This designation did not correspond to the speed of their movement. On October 25th —^{12:00} noon they withdrew in the direction of Flitsch, which had been included in the enemy position system. But already 3 km SW of the city a bivouac was set up. The only road from Flitsch to Saga was still completely jammed on October 26 by columns of ammunition and provisions. It was not until October 27th that they came — by 1.5 km! - further. The good weather had made the stagnation easier to endure so far. But now it had suddenly changed. The horses were constantly standing in the rain. The next two days didn't bring any progress either. Finally, on October 30th, they reached the Isonzo downhill to Serpenizza, on October 31st via Karfreit to Staroselo. In the poor condition of the horses as a result of the wetness and poor feed intake, the Ex. Dept. forward very slowly. It was not until November 3rd that they marched to Bergogna in accordance with orders, and reached Nimis on November 4th via Platschis. The path went up and down all the time, and that made the march a great effort. The rest day on November 5th was therefore appropriate. On November 6 we went via Tarcento-Collalto to Mels. There Capt. Pagenstecher joined the "battery". He had orders to form a Batl. to put together. On November 7th he went with Lt. Schwengers back in the direction of Tarvis and put the rear parts of the 8 G.T.M.Co. and MWK 302 on the march to Gemona. On November 10th these off. again at the front with the "Bataillon Pagenstecher". Meanwhile, on November 8th, this had continued the advance in the direction of Travesio, but could only get as far as San Daniele and had to remain there until November 10th, since any advance on the roads was impossible. The road to the Tagliamento Bridge at Ragogna was completely overcrowded with columns, and traffic across the bridge was only possible at large intervals and taking into account returning columns.

Finally, on November 11, in the pouring rain, the river was crossed, after the "battery" had been ready for the march for 11 hours and waited for the possibility of an advance. Travesio was not reached until the next morning. Only a weak day's march had been covered (about 15.5 km).

On November 13th we advanced in the direction of Susegana (Piave). On November 14th Maniago was reached via Sequal-Fanna in the evening. In the early morning of the next day, orders were received to march in forced marches to Roverodo with 4 mortars and service, 120 shots. There was a shipment on trucks and 4^o took. Departure, 7^o abd Arrival in Susegana. As early as 9^o abd the company installed the 4 mortars at Mina am Piave on the orders of the battalion. November 16 — 4^o am they were ready to fire with 10 rounds for the mortar. The battalion was to prepare the crossing over the river by shelling the opposite Montello slope.

It was on the extreme right wing of Group Hofacker (German Gen.Kdo. 51), 26 ID. The General had expected serious resistance on the Piave from the outset and had good reasons not to attempt a coup d'état. On the contrary, he immediately began to prepare for a planned river crossing. In the night 14./15. 11th he had the 26th ID pushed into the front line on his right wing. The 8th G.T.M.Co. was also used for reinforcement.

In the first week of November, AOK 14 knew that the defeated enemy was about to form a new front. This ran from the Brenta Valley through the Grappa area to the Piave. The weakest point was between Brenta and Piave. There the enemy front was to be smashed and at the same time attacked head-on across the Piave. There the enemy, numerous troops mixed up, began to build up. However, it soon became known that French and English troops were also present.

In the meantime, the attack between Brenta and Piave had led to heavy fighting without much result, and so the leadership was forced to initiate attacks that had been planned and prepared. But that required a lot of time. In this way the attack by the Hofacker Group was also postponed, and the next few days could be used to repair and improve the mortar positions and for target reconnaissance. But since the positions were under ever increasing enemy artillery fire, the battalion withdrew its operations — except for a mortar watch — back to

Conegliano. Only the transport of ammunition was promoted, so that on November 24 each mortar could be served with 30 shots.

But the days had changed. The attack could only be planned for November 30 (more details below), and only then was the forced crossing of the Piave to take place. Above all, it was the lack of ammunition for the attack in the mountains that caused the day of the attack to be postponed again and again until the reinforcement of the Italian front by 16 French and English divisions made the chances of success slim and the OHL gave up on December 3rd ordered the offensive in Italy.

On the same day, the "battery" received the order to remove the mortars and drive back to Conegliano. On the following day the AOK 14 ordered you to march back to the 8th G.T.M.Co.. For this purpose, from 5th to 9th Marched 12th via Vittorio-Santa Croce-Belluno-Feltre to Primolano in the Brenta Valley. Then the "Flying Battery" was dissolved (December 10). The parts belonging to the 8th Company marched to join it to Campomulo camp, west of Monte Meletta.

Let us now follow the path of the parts of the company that we had left in the Pustinal camp on October 24th. The order from AOK 14 had arrived there on October 31 that they and Company 302 had to march to Tarvis. Accommodation was moved into there on November 1st on the Briesenik plateau. After 4 m. MW and 4 wagons had been brought from Wittelbreth to Tarvis, on November 8th - as we saw, on the orders of Capt. Pagenstecher - the march to Gemona east of the upper Tagliamento began, and on November 9th Ponttafel reached. There, however, counter-orders came from AOK 14, which recalled the two companies for loading to Arnoldstein (far north of Tarvisio). Five days passed in Tarvisio, and it was not until November 16th that we left Arnoldstein. It went via Villach - Lienz - Franzensfeste - Bozen to Trento, where on November 17, in the evening, they were accommodated in the sapper barracks. Hereby the compn. behind the army group of Duke Eugen in a wide arc through the Alps from the Drau valley to the valley of the Eisack (Franzensfeste) and into the Etsch valley (Bozen, Trento) to the army group Conrad.

This movement was related to the development of the operational situation. At the end of October, Army Group Conrad also received orders to attack from Tyrol. The push started on November 10 at Asiago. The enemy had abandoned their representations and in the Sugana-Brenta valley had retreated to the frontier. As soon as the right wing of Krauss Group passed Collicello in the Brenta Valley, Conrad's left wing west of the Brenta was to advance across the Valpina-Dori-Enego line behind the defenders of the Brenta Valley.

On November 16, Krauss's right wing (Wieden Group) had advanced to the area of Collicello. There the valley narrowed, making defense easier. Despite the courage to make sacrifices, further advance proved impossible. Only after the arrival of more batteries and after thorough, time-consuming preparation was there any chance of success, and so the attack was postponed to November 19th, then to November 21st. flanked by artillery by the 18th Infantry to attack from the western bank of the Brenta, The attack by Army Group Conrad near Asiago had been able to make more progress since November 15th. The offensive was too weak from the outset and lacked sufficient emphasis. It was not until November 22 that the attacks near Asiago were resumed in concert with Krauss's group. The left wing, the K. u. K. 18 ID, gained the Monte Lisser area to the south. But the storming of the Meletta Block, the actual target of the attack, was unsuccessful, mainly due to a lack of sufficient artillery. Emperor Karl, who had been present at the battle, then personally ordered it to be stopped.

A new attack on Army Group Conrad and in the Grappa area was only planned for November 30, and our MWK was also counted on for this. Let's accompany them to here first.

The company was loaded on November 19 from Trento with 9 mortars onto 8 cars, transported to Vezena and housed there in good wooden barracks in the Sterzing forest camp. She was the III. Austrian AK subordinated. On November 22, the company advanced further via Gertele to the Larici camp at an altitude of 1600 m, where the weather was sunny and warm. But in the night 25./26. 11. Heavy snowfall began. The snow was soon 20-25 cm deep.

On November 28th, the climbing group, to which the company had been placed, moved ahead of us via Campo Mulo to Roccolo Spinle. There was accommodation in barracks. The 4 heavy MW were loaded onto cars in the Larici camp and pulled up. The fact that the company had given most of

their horses (42) to the "Flying Battery" was now a nuisance. Because the remaining 35 could only be used to carry away food, fodder and equipment, a field kitchen and luggage. The steep rocky paths made the greatest demands on them. You could only move from the spot with four horses. Our wagons were too heavy and too wide for this terrain. The Austrians, which took the same payload, were more suitable.

On November 28 the deputy comp. leader, Lt. Forster, with Field Marshal Lt. v. climb. Conrad's attack—like that of Krauss Group in the Grappa area—had been repeatedly postponed because of ammunition problems. On December 1st and 2nd, the Lts. Forster and Bähre (12.11.17 transferred to the company) the position on the southern slope of the 1824 m high Monte Meletta. The result was that using the heavy mortar because of their short range there could not be a question. It also had to be taken into account that the enemy position was 200 m higher. The idea of installing it in front of the first line also had to be dropped because the bare, rocky and steep intermediate terrain made it impossible to work unnoticed. But the 5 m. mortar could be installed. This happened on December 3rd after twelve hours of hard work on the mortar positions. Three mortars came into the infantry position, two mortars 30 m behind and about 150 m to the left of it. A technical platoon of the Austrians was also active.

But the ammunition! She did not come because the cars could not come up due to black ice.

On the morning of December 4 the attack by Army Group Conrad began again. To the right and left of Group Kletter he advanced far beyond expectation, so that Group Kletter, which itself was not due to attack until December 5th, on that day in the afternoon. could take the Monte Meletta without much preparation for fire. The Italians had partially evacuated it. The forced silence was more bearable for the good mortar crews than if the charging infantry had urgently needed their fire support.

On December 7 the mortars were removed and a new position at Roncki and Il Buso explored. No suitable position was found there, since the Italians, who were also 200 m higher here, could see the position from three sides and the rocky terrain offered no protection against sight. In addition, the distance as the crow flies was already 1050 m. The difference in altitude also had to be taken into account, and so it was questionable whether the range of the m. mortars was sufficient. As a result, the installation was omitted. The troops that continued to attack were able to advance the positions as far as the Frenzela Gorge.

On December 10th, the parts of the company that had become free after the "Flying Battery" was disbanded returned to it. On December 14th, 12 substitute teams were added.

In the meantime the snow had risen to 40-50 cm and the nights had become very cold.

Loading took place in Primolano on December 21st. From 12/22/17 to 1/6/18 the company was again in Trento, with parts in the Ravina camp and in the sapper barracks. The aim was to promote training and repair things. The new year called for new tasks. The campaign against the Italians had made the greatest demands on the company's ability to fight, even if its very special characteristic of active participation by shooting was seldom favourable. But our company had also felt a whiff of the great course of the operations, and to have been "participant" in the heavy beating of the faithless former ally and at the same time to have roamed their wonderful country — that has remained a dear memory for everyone.

On January 6, 1818 the company started the journey via Munich-Karlsruhe to the Bitsch camp in the Vosges, where from January 10th they were housed in the local barracks. She brought 15 EK II with her from Italy.

The company was assigned to the Army Artillery Shooting School as "Army Troops". Their task was to show how the artillery worked together. This had to be done under the newly appointed Komp.Führer, Lt. Hardege of the reserve of IR 82, which arrived on January 10th. Lt. Schwengers, who was awarded the EK I in Italy (19.11.17), was transferred to the MWER Markendorf.

The joint sharpshooting with the artillery took place under the direction of Major Leonhardi. The allocation of mines was plentiful. On January 21, Colonel Schulenburg, General d. Art. of AAB., the line. It was a demonstration before senior commanders. Duke Albrecht of Württemberg, the leader of the army group, was also present. It was used: 2 heavy, 4 medium, and 8 light mortars. Despite the gusty wind, the heavy mines very well. The scatter was very

small. However, a heavy mine fell into the mortar as a result of the propellant charge deflagrating. The lanes in the wire entanglement were completely closed.

On February 11th and 18th and on March 2nd, the firing school in Haguenau demonstrated the combination of artillery and armored personnel carriers to the "Führerkurs Woerth" in Haguenau.

At that time, the infantry service and carbine sharpshooting were also carried out, and so the company was well prepared to face a new major task. At the end of January, from the 5th MWEB Unterlüß, she had received 1 Uff., 10 Gefr. and 32 men as replacements. From the same reason, on February 20, Lt. Rosenblum and Lt. Köster were transferred.

On 3.3. was once again loaded, and it was then transported by rail to Guise with the target of Origny on the upper Oise in the area of the 18th Army. From March 6th the company was in Regny, 10 km east of St. Quentin, in poor quarters. A horse stable had yet to be built. It was assigned to the MWB VII. in the section of the 36th ID and should initially stand for 4 heavy. and 11 m. MW build. Due to higher instructions (Group Oise of 3.3.18) it was made a special duty that the officers and men had to take off their troop insignia and leave all papers behind. Under no circumstances should the enemy, if he attacked himself, recognize our preparations. Therefore the working troops had orders not to take part in such a case, but to withdraw.meet, depended to a large extent on the surprise success of the mighty undertaking, which the German army

The Company's place of work was in Sector D of the 36th Infantry Division, where the St. Quentin-La Fère road emerged from the German arched positions around St. Quentin to the south, just west of the street mentioned. On March 8 — 1^o a.m. the 3rd platoon marched to the construction of the position after the company leader and the three platoon leaders had explored the position the day before. At first only ammunition tunnels were built. The 2nd and 3rd trains moved into basement rooms in the suburb of St. Quentin in order to save the 10 km march. Lt. Köster, who with Lt. Bähre lived in the city. The latter was killed on March 16th by Lt. Pike perch detached. On March 11, the ranges were measured by the measuring team. The apron wood transport could be accomplished on the field railway from the Pioneer Park Origny. The ammunition arrived by regular rail at the suburban St. Quentin station to be loaded onto field railroad cars. The transport had to be carried out by the company without helpers. A precise schedule regulated the quantities to be transported each night, and a strict order demanded that whatever power was envisaged, it was imperative that it be delivered to the estates. All in all, for the time being, 50 were provided for each m. mortar, for each heavy. and each wing mortar 30 rounds. Munitions officer was since March 15 Lt. rose flower On March 17th the ammunition transport was finished, exactly as ordered.

Commander {sic} of the MWB VII was Hptm. Charlier. He had a total of 30 heavy, 69 m. and 8 wing mortars. Below him was the "Group

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Hardege" with the 8th G.T.M.Co. (4 guns, 10 m mortars) in the section of the Gr.Rgts. 5. The company was divided into the following subgroups:

- A. Lt. Köster, 2 heavy, 2 medium, Observer: Lt. Bähre, VF Wlottkowski,
- B. Lt. Forster, 1" 1" " Off.St. Gipping,
- C.Lt. Zander, 1" 3" " Lt. d. R. Zimpfer, VF Lehmann,
- D. Lt. Rosenblum, - 4 " " Lt. d. R. Serr, VF Kobis.

The mortar leaders placed the 3rd platoon for A (this also one for group D), the 2nd platoon for B and D, and the 1st platoon for C.

On March 13, construction of the mortar stands could begin. The clay soil allowed brisk work, so that the construction progressed well. Neat floor plans and cross-section drawings 1 : 200 in the appendices to the war diary still bear witness to the care with which the buildings were built operated. have been.

On March 16, the 1st platoon also moved into cellars in the suburbs. In the night 18./19. were the mortars of groups A and B, and the heavy. Group C mortars installed, the rest the following night. According to the "order to fire" the preparatory fire for "St. Michael" in one fell swoop and start a 20 minute general fire attack on the enemy mortars with all mortars. For this purpose, all mortars had to be loaded at the appointed hour and minute and fired at once according to precisely set clocks.

After a silence of 30 minutes, a sudden fire attack of all MW against their storm preparation targets followed for 10 minutes. After another 90 minutes of silence, the 5th period was followed by an hour in which all MW had to zero in on their targets with careful observation. The 6th period was 89½ minutes and was dedicated to target shooting. For this alone were scheduled: for each heavy. About 25 mortars, for each meter about 40 shots. It was definitely ordered that the last mine be between the 299¼ and 299½ minutes since the beginning of the

Shooting had to be fired, so that it was on target shortly before the 300th minute. Then, without cheers, the infantry broke into the enemy positions. The barrage of fire preceded the attackers, but only light mortars could participate.

These regulations offer an insight into the structure of the great company, which was worked through in the same way for all weapons, especially artillery of all calibers.

Rain set in on March 19th. In the evening all the mortars were installed in position and the telephone lines were laid. The directions of fire were determined by the measuring squad. The company was ready to fire. Of the m. mortars, three were of the old type. All mines were washed and calibrated.

March 20 came up in fog and rain. 110 a.m. all booths were occupied. They were in thick fog. a heavy Werfer was buried by artillery hits, but was soon ready to fire again. In the afternoon the weather cleared up a bit. The order came through that the big attack would take place the next day and that preparations for firing should be made punctually at 40 a.m. have to start. At the same time it was ordered from higher places that in the

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night the Alsations (on May 19, 2018, two Alsations defected from an MWK also installed near St. Quentin and betrayed the impending breakthrough) had to be withdrawn. From this order, those who were affected by the company, e.g. T. very capable people were hard hit.

The start of the battle was getting closer and closer. At midnight the telephones were put on for the first time. 20 am the observers were at their posts. Finally, at 40, the hellish concert of preparing the fire suddenly began and ran like clockwork. As a result of enemy counteraction, however, fell in the course of the hours. and three m. Throwers out. In other respects, too, conditions were not favourable. Gas was in the position soon after beginning, and it was unclear whether it was repulsed friendly or enemy. From the age of 60 you had to use a gas mask to shoot, and there were a few failures. Those affected were only temporarily unable to fight. The observation was impossible because of the very dense fog. You couldn't see 10 meters away. Nevertheless, the location of the shots on obstacles and trenches, as well as the effect of the mines, was excellent.

So the infantry could 10.40 am. effortlessly take the first ditches. With her went Lt. Zander, a Uff. and two pions. in order to detect any remaining enemy nests, machine guns, etc. at an early stage. To eliminate them, two m. mortars were ready to proceed. But her intervention was not required. Meanwhile, in order to make it easier for the infantry escort batteries to follow quickly, 15 engineers were immediately made available to build a road.

As the battle moved forward, the MW were upgraded. However, the company only kept 4 meter mortars. This corresponded to the order according to which our company had to be ready with the MWB VII for mobile use in the island suburb at the disposal of the 18th Army. There it was ready to advance on March 22 with 189 men. The unneeded people marched under Lt. Serr and Lt. Zimpfer back to Regny. Eight EK II were later awarded for March 21 (April 14). For one of the recipients, however, the award came too late, as we shall see.

The next few days were spent in clearing-up work, and it was not until March 28th that a new assignment for the company was in prospect. It appeared to be a crossing to the south bank of the Oise on the Noyon — La Fère line. The company advanced to the 7th Army and billeted in Cugny (13 km north of Chauny on the Oise), where they found shelter in houses that had only recently been vacated by the residents, and where there were still potatoes. Changing orders over the next few days showed that the company's deployment had not yet been finally determined by the higher command could become. The great battle had gradually lost its stormy pace and had come to a temporary standstill by the end of March. A new step forward was to be taken first on the right wing of 7th Army by taking the "corner of Amigny". Lt. Hardege and the Lts. Köster and Bähre explored the Oise crossings at Condren (east of Chauny), where the

company was assigned to build roads and bridges, when finally, on April 2nd, the "Crépy Group" our company of the 14th RD under-

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presented, the Südl. the Oise lowland with the front to the west and was charged with the storming of Amigny and the "twin mountains" to the west. The lodgings now became the "Heidelager" at St. Lambert-Fe near Bovette on the great La Fère - Laon road. The task was to install

4 Iko mortars. These were positioned on April 3 by VF Mäcklenburg with field railway, as well as 40 mines for each mortar. The operating teams under Lt. Bähre found shelter in the 'Ammunition Cave' in St. Gobain. The turrets were installed on April 5 ("MW section Hardege"). From 110 a.m. from then on the command posts were manned. The targets were dugout groups behind the 1st enemy trenches and a factory at the north exit of Barisis.

The storm was scheduled for 6 a.m. on April 6. The assault-fire of the artillery and trench mortars had to begin at 4.45. The execution was on time. The enemy responded with light and medium calibers. A mortar shattered the pipe on the 3rd shot without causing any injuries. But that Artillery fire killed and one engineer was wounded. For the dead (pioneer Guth) the EK II arrived on April 14, which had been intended for him since March 21. In 75 minutes the mortars had fired 87 shots (of which a single mortar fired 33 shots), despite the fact that leaders and teams had never used an Iko mortar. These mortars had proven to be a very useful weapon. Due to their bedding, they did not jam as easily as towed mortars. Disadvantages were the heavy and multi-part bedding. The shots were good. The storm succeeded. The expansion of the mortars followed immediately.

After the good results of April 6 the army leadership decided to take advantage of the favorable days and continue the attack. Here the participation of the 8th G.T.M.Co. on the installation of only one Iko mortar at Fresnes under Lt. Serr was limited, and this officer too was able to return with his crew (20 men) on April 9, since the enemy had given up his position at Fresnes.

The parts of the company reunited in the "Heidelager" and on April 10 they marched to Erlon sw Marle on the Serre for good accommodation. A special "Bataillon Hauf" was to be put together.

In the past, the company had been subordinated to the various command authorities and units in quick succession. This had resulted in back and forth marches and took the forces of the company, including the horses, badly. After two days in Erlon, of which April 12 could be used for delousing in Marle, another marching order arrived, which was canceled again shortly afterwards. The distant Montdidier had been designated as the marching goal. But on the way there the company was stopped again on April 13 in Danizy east of La Fère, where accommodation was makeshift. After three days, quarters and subordination changed again. From April 16 to April 27, the company was in Regny, which they did not remember well from March. From now on she was subject to the T.M.B. IV.

After a number of promotions "due to bravery in the face of the enemy" had already been announced on April 11, news of the promotion of VF Kobis and Wlottkowski to Lts. d. Pure. Since there were now two officers too many in the company, the Lts. Forster and Zander transferred to MWEK Markendorf.

On April 27 the march went via Ribemont to Erlon and then to Sisonne (a day's march east of Laon). This last march had to be in the night of 28/29. be carried out was 28 km long and very arduous. Many people became footsick, and the general state of health was poor. But good accommodation for 10 days healed the damage.

The mortar equipment was at the end of the month: 4 heavy new style, 7 medium new style, 1 medium old style,

Already on May 1st the Lts. Hardege, Kobis and Wlottkowski in position for reconnaissance. The Battalion Command of IV MWB (Captain Rentner) had reported that AOK 7 was expecting a major attack by Foch's reserves and that precautions had to be taken, all French attack preparations to be able to fight as early as possible and with strong force development. Therefore, among other things, the reinforced MWB IV in position southeast of Corbény, south of the main road to Reims. In reality, the high command hardly procured a French attack. With this news they justified the conspicuous reinforcement of our front in front of their own troops.

Rather, a German attack on the Damenweg was planned, but for reasons of secrecy, all points should remain in the dark for as long as possible. For this reason, strict regulations on secrecy were particularly tightened here again. Nevertheless, a Battalion order of May 13 contained the sentence: "When ammunition was being loaded, quite a lot of noise was made, especially with the 8th G.T.M.Co."

The following aliases, among others, were prescribed for long-distance calls:

for black MW new species = young Berta,
old old

" m." 16 new species = young Liese.

13 old old

On May 2, the preparatory work in the position had begun. Accommodation was in two tunnels in the 1st line and in Berrieux north of Corbény. The company had 8 stands with mortars of a new type, 6 stands with heavy A new type of mortar. But as early as May 7th, any earthwork was initially forbidden. The French had so far not been able to find any work at all in our front trench system, since we had allowed the installations to fall into disrepair as an advance position for a future defensive battle. This impression now had to be preserved for the enemy. All existing tunnels and bunkers could be used will. Under these circumstances, 2 Utff., 20 Pion. retrieved from position.

With the expected accumulation of troops, the company received orders to build a camp themselves. It was started 2 km north of La Selve on May 3rd and occupied on May 10th; it was given the name: "Schnepfenstrich camp".

Despite everything, the transport of ammunition began on May 7th and was very difficult. The conveyor track was often in two, and the ground was slippery due to the rain. every heavy Throwers should receive 30 shots, each meter 50 shots.

For the tactical structure of the T.M. (Section D) under Captain Pensioner (T.M.B. IV), 10 groups with a total of 45 heavy, 54 medium, 24 light mortars formed. The "heavy group Hardege" counted 6 heavy. and 8 light mortars. Lt. d. R. Hardege had divided his group into:

Thrower : Guide : Observer :

Group A: 2 heavy, 2 m. Lt. Rosenblum Lt. kobis

" B: -- 2 " VF Schorsch Lt. Wlottkowski

" C: 1 " 1 " } Lt. Zimpfer Lt. Kobis

" D: 1 " 2 " } VF Kotbiehr

" E: 2 " 1 " Lt. Köster Lt. Wlottkowski

The code word "Cat" was given for the forthcoming operation, in which the positions of the company were in the section of the 50th Infantry Division. The start was for May 24 — 20 AM. intended. Until then, the company had to bring forward and install the mortars independently. In spite of everything, the construction of the positions had been promoted, and the mortars installed on the 21st. But the attack did not begin yet. It was not until May 26 was it scheduled for 2 a.m. on the following day. At 4:40 a.m., the order was given to penetrate the enemy's position.

It was the big attack on the Damenweg, with which the OHL pursued a diversionary purpose. The "Great Battle" in March/April had not brought the desired operational success, and so GHQ felt compelled to think about further operations. She chose an attack in Flanders, which should bring the decision. Since the enemy's main reserves were meanwhile found there, they had to be withdrawn from there by a large-scale attack. That was the rationale behind the attack in late May.

Already on May 26 abds the company moved into position. The mortars stood ready to fire. The telephones were connected, observations, group and company command post occupied.

The fire started abruptly on the 27th — 20 in the morning. Observation was favorable, enemy counteraction weak. The location of our shots and their effect were excellent. However, many short shots could be observed, which were only partly due to operating errors, but mainly to the propellant charges.

4.40 a.m. the mine fire was stopped. The company had 199 heavy and 440 m. Mines fired — a great achievement. At 4.40 the infantry attack began, but did not find the slightest resistance.

We had three lightly wounded. A command of 2 Off. (Lts. Kobis and Wlottkowski), 6 subtitles. and 60 men helped the artillery to overcome the funnel field and were used to build column routes. The other teams expanded the mortars.

At the beginning of June a new assignment beckoned, this time again on the battlefield of March, again in the area of the 18th Army. It was the "Gneisenau" attack, the battles on the Matz, which were intended to advance the front further and establish a direct link with the right wing of 7th Army, which was also to advance. This army had to attack sw Soissons at the same time. An important aspect was the need to use the only route that the troops had to rely on in the far advanced bend of the Marne, and which led via Soissons, by lectures to secure the front against enemy access. The 18th Army initially wanted to attack via the Cuvilly (south of Orvillers-Sorel) - Matzbach line. There was no daily goal. The front of the 18th Army between Montdidier and Noyon had resulted from the [Operation] Michael battles and still lacked good starting positions and accommodation opportunities for the attacking troops. The terrain to be conquered was difficult mountainous land, and hindered the effective support of the assaulting infantry with escort batteries. Greater value was therefore placed on the participation of light and medium trench mortars to accompany the infantry. A new task also awaited our company here. All in all it was a particularly difficult undertaking. It was scheduled for June 7, but Gen. Ludendorff postponed it until June 9 because the artillery reinforcements from the 7th to the 18th Army did not arrive early enough and he attached great importance to careful preparation of fire.

The company was — in the battalion. — since June 2nd in Beaulieu (10 km S.E. Roye). A detachment of 11 Ufff., 59 men was brought forward to Tilloloy (6 km SW Roye) on June 4th. The positions were in front of Orvillers-Sorel in the section of the 19th Infantry Division (XVII. AK). Construction began the same day under Lt. d. R. Kobis, ammunition under Lt. d. R. Serr. Again, surveillance of suspects was made mandatory to prevent defections.

As we have seen, the special situation assigned a special role to the light MW. That is why the 8th G.T.M.Co. was also armed with 20 light mortars, which it received from the RIR 48 and 251. Their task was: "The company holds down the enemy positions in front of the right wing (IR 74) that cannot be reached by our art The time for this came only after the infantry would have reached the northern edge of the village of Orvillers.

The installation of the turret was completed on June 7. Ammunition transport continued with great difficulty. The weather was dry and clear. The dust lay in thick layers on all paths. The constant traffic created clouds of dust and gave enemy planes clues for reconnaissance. Lively disruptive fire was a hindrance and caused three wounds, to which were added one more on June 8 and on the day of the attack itself two dead (due to shattered pipes) and 11 gassed.

For the fight the company was divided into four groups, three with 4 mortars each, one with 8 mortars. 40 am put the light Throw in their fire after the artillery had already fired 2 hours earlier. A minute before the storm, Groups A, B and D jumped over to the barrage, Group C helped the escort batteries through the enemy position. The fire was observed by three observers from the front line of infantry posts, was well placed and had a good explosive effect. The sudden onset of rapid fire and the constant heavy rolling of the l. mines achieved a relatively large moral impression for this type of projectile. 3203 light mines were fired. An enemy machine-gun that stopped the advance of the infantry was killed with a few shots at the instigation of an observer advancing with the infantry, who directed the fire of a mortar at it.

After delivery of the light mortar on June 10 and the final farewell to the two fallen soldiers at the heroes' cemetery of Tilloloy, the company was reunited in Beaulieu. Several promotions were announced and the next few days were used for further training based on the experiences gained. A "company festival" featuring athletic games took place on the afternoon of June 15 brought a welcomed change.

The officer distribution was the following:

- 1st train: Lt. Köster, Lt. Wlottkowski,
2. " Lt. Serr, Off.St. Griffin,
3. "Lt. Bähre, Lt. Kobis.

Lt. Zimpfer and VF Verspohl, the former became a telephone and mess officer. Lt. d. R. Rosenblum is MWERgt. Markendorf has been relocated.

On June 19 there was a rail transport to Wasigny, 14 km north of Rethel, in the area of the 3rd Army, and from there it was a 5 km walk to Mesmont's accommodation. A week later the quarters were transferred to the clean Coucy-Amagne in the lowlands of the upper Aisne east of Rethel, and during the night of June 27/28 was marched further up the river via Vouziers to Savigny. There was something vague in the air, as if something big was about to happen.

The "Group Perthes," in whose area they lay, had again made secrecy and precautionary measures in favor of a successful surprise their first duty. Members of MWB IV, in their increased self-confidence, which was justified after the previous deeds, had told the infantry position crew too much and also caused the battalion leader to issue warnings.

The positions were southeast of Tahure in the section of the 7th ID The company formed the left wing of the Half-Battalion Franzen. In part the mortar stands had to be built out. In general, calm reigned in that sector of the front. The air above him was hot and dry. On June 30, Lt. Wlottkowski, 14 Ufff. and 82 men into position and found shelter in a tunnel. During the night, 450 m. mines were brought to the "Pionierpark Torgau", 1500 m behind the positions, to which 350 m. and 1000 m. and then more followed. To bring them into position with vehicles, an approach route and three temporary bridges had been built over trenches. The enemy planes now bombed the approach routes and illuminated the area at night with parachute flares. On July 4 came 8 medium, 4 heavy mortars to the Pion.Park Torgau and were covered there.

But in the midst of the most industrious work, an order called the company several km further to the left to relieve T.M.Co. 195 (228th Inf.Div.), which was intended to take part in the advance after the storm and was therefore relocated to the marching road that passed through the previous section of our Comp. led.

So the mortars were moved to the Ripontmühle camp. The replacement should cost the company dearly. Because under the local name of this mill, even before the attacking battle began, it suffered the most losses in the whole war! Already on July 8 it started with dead and wounded on. Bringing the mortars into position caused the greatest difficulties, since the access roads were constantly under fire and the positions were on a slope sloping towards the enemy. It could only be worked at night. Were provided during the night of July 8/9. Eight mortars, half of them disassembled and covered behind the stands. One is knocked over by an enemy shell. The artillery and machine gun fire had greatest strength. Hollows and valleys were gassed by the enemy. This continued for the following days. On July 10, all the mortars were still installed, but they were not ready to fire until July 12. Cleaning the mines took up the time before the battle began. The example dept. had received 18 replacements on July 20.

It was significant that a few days ago (since July 10th) an "advance commando" of MWB IV - from our company Lt. Zimpfer, 1 Ufff., 1 man - had left in the direction of Lille. For the "battle of the offensive on the Marne and in the Champagne" beginning on July 15, through which the rest of the enemy reserves were to be drawn from the Lille area to the Marne and into the Champagne, the "Hagen" attack in Flanders was to follow follow closely and hereby fight for the final possible decision against the English. The movements for this were prepared in the grandest style. However, the prerequisite was the expected great success in Champagne, in which the company was now involved.

Their leadership lay — since Lt. Hardege was still on leave until July 19 — in the hands of Lt. Köster, after whom the "Subgroup G. of the MW, Group Ika 6" was named. It included 8 m. and 4 heavy. Launcher of our company Lt. Köster himself took over the management of the two heavy, Lt. Serr those of the two middle fire groups, observation was "over bank". Since the shot was fired with a high charge, the strictest requirement was that no one was standing at the mortar when the shot was fired. The order of fire brought nothing unusual. The company did not have to take part in the barrage of fire, but rather to help forward over the funnel area with parts of the artillery after the start of the storm and also to expand the mortars.

Precisely 10 a.m. the battle began. The hits were very good. The day brought three wounded, one of whom died after a few days. The "Ripont list" had risen to 5 dead, 31 wounded. The commander of 7th Infantry Division was justified in expressing his thanks and appreciation, and the commander of T.M./7th Inf.Div., Oblt. Krümmel, expressed his joyful pride at having led such troops by emphasizing the bravery of the troops, their self-sacrificing activity during the preparations and the excellent performance on the shooting day itself.

All troops of the attacking armies involved could claim the same praise. Despite this, the result of the battle did not live up to the hopes that had been entertained. This was clearly recognizable on July 16. The enemy had withdrawn his main forces to the second position before the attack, of the day and hour of which he had long since been informed by defectors, so that the German fire preparations were mostly aimed at deserted trenches. On July 18, Marshal Foch launched his great counter-offensive from the forest of Villers-Cotterêts, which changed the course of the war.

In the meantime, however, the transports to Flanders had started; on the evening of July 16 they had planned with artillery, armored personnel carriers and aircraft formations started. Another advance command of the comp. under Lt. Köster left Sugny station there on July 18; Target point Sailly-s. La Lys, sw Armentières. Two days later the comp. under Lt. Hardege in the Battalion formation to Loos, a suburb of Lille, to the 187 ID (55 Corps, 6 Army).

But the first work, unfortunately, was to help move mines back in the division's sector in order to speed up this business. The mortars had to be handed in at Pion Park Haubourdin near Lille. None of this looked like a major attack.

Accordingly, on July 23rd the company moved from Loos near Lille to Sailly on the Lys. It was subordinate to PB 187. The positions were at Vieux-Berquin, 7 km east of Hazebrouck. She started work on July 24th. This had to be completed on that day 110 abds, since the AOK even feared an enemy attack and the company had to be on the alert in the Sailly camp at the hour specified. The return transport of the mines and the empty material lasted until the end of the month. This unpleasant work had to be accomplished under a rainy sky. It claimed the last dead (3) and wounded (1) from the company, partly from aerial bombs, partly from enemy art. jamming fire on the approach routes.

After the entire company had stayed in Loos near Lille for two days, the company received marching orders via Fretin-Orchies-Raismes to Hergnies, 13 km north of Valenciennes, "at rest".

When Gen. Ludendorff had to decide on July 18 to take countermeasures against Foch's attack, he allowed the Army Group Crown Prince Rupprecht to continue with their attack preparations for "Hagen". But in the end he even had to fall back on the reserves there. The "Hagen" attack in Flanders was therefore no longer able to bring rapid and decisive success. That's why Ludendorff gave it up. The Army Group Kronprinz Rupprecht was put on defense and that also explains the downsizing activity of our company.

After a five-day stay in Hergnies, the company was transferred to Fresnes, 8 km north, Valenciennes (August 11), and the independence of our company as "OHL troops" ended on the following day. Because they joined the newly formed TMB 19 (Captain Schrömgens) as the 1st company, together with the T.M.Cos. 95, 310 and 320. Lt. Serr became Batls. Adjutant. The Ministry of War had decided (decree of July 25, 1918) "to facilitate tactical use and training" to combine the hitherto independent OHL-T.M.Co. determined.

The company was reluctant to give up its independence. Under the name 8th G.T.M.Co., it achieved the best successes, especially on the western front. Pride were off. and teams on their guard cords and their "mountain uniform". The guard cords were allowed to be carried on to everyone's satisfaction. The fighting atmosphere and above all the fire discipline were excellent.

The MWEB 1 was a replacement troop, and the Trains-E.Abt. Spandau.

At the beginning of September 1918, tactical exercises began within the company. On September 9th, there was a transport from the Raismes freight station via Cologne — Straßburg — Appenweier to Schliengen in Baden and then march to Kandern (T.M.-School of the AAB.). After a few days, the Batl. the XXV. Res.Corps (AAB.) and the 1st Company in Malsberg - Lütschenbach) housed and assigned to the 44th Ldw.Div. to set up tank mine barriers. During an "Autumn" patrol operation by this division on September 18, Company 2 Sturm-gasse shot through the enemy wire obstacles. The line had Lt. d. R. and deputy comp leader Köster. Group A under Lt. d. R. Kobis had 3 heavy and 8 m. Thrower, Group B under Lt. d. R. Wlottkowski over 4 and 7 medium mortar. The 44th Ldw.Div. had 3 heavy guns among the company's mortars. and 7 medium mortars provided. The storm lanes were each 150 m long. Eleven mortars were available for each lane and each was given 11 linear meters of lane to shoot. The mortars were installed in the axis of the storm lanes, staggered as far back as possible. This formation had the advantage that short and long shots were in the storm lanes. The task was completed in no

more than the prescribed 10 minutes. The reconnaissance directed by LIR 81 towards the Hirzbacher Forest had the desired result of clarifying the enemy situation. Later (October 8th) the company received three EK II. "for outstanding achievements".

On September 21 the company moved into accommodation in Illfurth. On October 4th, she was removed together with the staff and the 2nd company to take part in Operation "Oktoberfest" at Ldw.Inf.Reg. 13 of the 25th Ldw.Div. on October 7. The accommodation was Liebsdorf. Enemy posts should be intercepted. Lt. Hardege the "Group North". On this day the Batl. as such, the baptism of fire and received thanks and recognition from all superiors. The Battalion CO had personally convinced himself of the good fire discipline and the excellent shot result in the immediate vicinity of the firing position and spoke to Compn. his thanks. He also praised the good spirit and expressed the expectation that it would be preserved!

From October 17 Illfurth was again the accommodation where the 1st Company had to relieve the 3rd Company. For the performance of October 7th, three EK IIs arrived. On November 4 the compn. with training on the anti-tank gun; (Each company received 8 guns. Sniping with them began on November 9. On November 11 the order to transport the 6th Army arrived not carried out." The command authority was regulated in accordance with the orders given for the whole army. The commander gave the orders in agreement with the soldiers' council.

On November 12 billets were again at Kandern in Baden. The mortars and anti-tank guns remained there when the troops started to march away from the front on November 16, 1918. From November 24 the Batl. in Tiengen, on December 11 in Stühlingen, from December 12 to 21 in Neudingen. Then, after a three-day journey, it reached Jüterbog and from there marched to Markendorf on December 24. The four companies, which had long since lost strength due to the dismissal of members from Alsace and from the left bank of the Rhine, had been thrown together into a single company since December 12, 1918.

The Battalion was disbanded on January 9, 1919.